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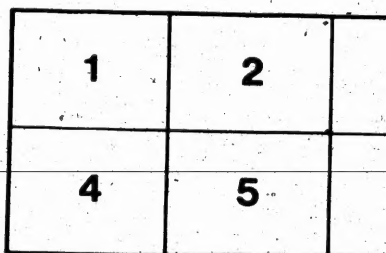
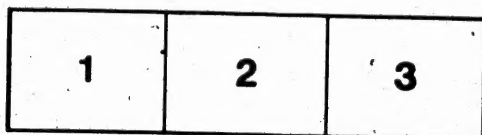
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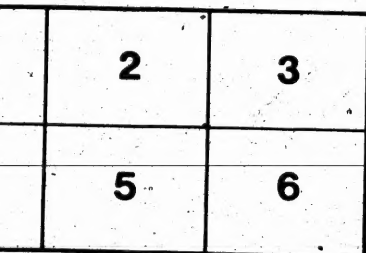
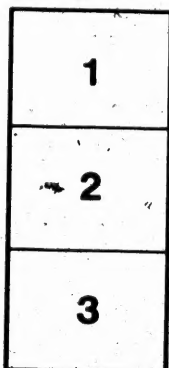
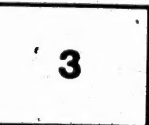
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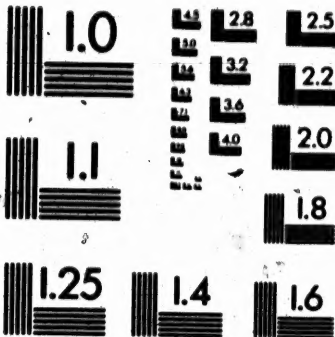
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THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND

APOSTOLIC

IN ORIGIN, CONSTITUTION AND DOCTRINE.

BY

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THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND, APOSTOLIC In Origin, Constitution, and Doctrine.

The early rise of the Church of England constitutes one of the most deeply interesting pages in Ecclesiastical History. It is one, however, with which her members in general are not familiar, and which it is now my endeavor to bring briefly under their consideration.

The *origin* and early history of the British Church first claim our attention. It is often the taunt of Romanists to say that our Church originated at the Reformation; and this is by many amongst even our own people supposed to be the case. No greater fallacy—no greater error than this can exist, and I shall therefore, in as small a space as possible, set forth the truth of the matter. It is also generally supposed that the Monk Augustine—who must not be confounded with that eminent divine of the early Christian Church, *Saint Augustine*—was the first to convey the Gospel to the shores of England. This, too, is an error. The Monk Augustine was sent by Gregory, Bishop of Rome, called the Great, in the year 596, to convert the pagan Anglo-Saxons. But on his arrival he found in England a regularly-constituted church, with its canonically-ordained Bishops, Presbyters and Deacons. The existence of this Church was *known* and *fully recognized* in Rome during previous ages, but was at this time *(the end of the sixth century)* most probably supposed to have become extinct, in consequence of the general commotion and slaughter caused by the successive depredations of the Picts, Scots, and Saxons, after the withdrawal of the Roman army.

British Bishops, as representatives of the British Church, were

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present at the great Councils of Arles, Sardica and Ariminum, more than *two hundred and fifty years* before Augustine came to England on his missionary enterprise. They there took part in the acts of those Councils, and ranked equally with the other Bishops of the Orthodox or Catholic Church. At this period of the history of the Universal Church, the Bishops of its several provinces were all *equal*, viz., the Bishops of Antioch, Constantinople, Alexandria, Rome, Britain, Gaul (France), &c. But the Bishop of Rome (called also Pope), on the removal of the seat of the Roman Empire to Constantinople, was the chief personage remaining, and not only assumed the loftiness and splendor of a temporal prince, but began to exercise a lordly power over the bishops of less renowned cities. From these small beginnings the Bishops of Rome gradually acquired an authority and sway which grew with the advance of ages, and has continued to our own day. The several churches of the west, namely, the churches of Spain, Gaul and Britain, were gradually brought under subjection to the Church of Rome; but at the Reformation the Church in England *returned to her own original independence*, and by God's blessing became the bulwark of the truth—the conservator of the faith—the ark of the infallible and everlasting Word of God.

I. The first position we take is this—that the *Church of England* is NOT of ROMAN but of *Apostolic origin*.

It may be with truth asserted that the Gospel was promulgated in England even *before* any church or organized society of believers existed in Rome. The truths of Christianity spread through the whole of the Roman Empire with such surprising rapidity that it is often difficult to say which province, district or country received them first.

To say the least, a church was planted in England about the same time as one was established in Rome. The old English Church, with its rightly and canonically ordained Bishops, Priests and Deacons, was therefore co-eval with the Roman Church. Of its antiquity we have unquestionable proofs from reliable sources.

The early British historian, Gildas, who lived more than half a century before Augustine's arrival in England, tells us that Christianity found its way into Britain about the year 61—the same year in which St. Paul was conveyed a prisoner to Rome, where there were disciples,

but as yet no organized church. Theodoret, Bishop of Cyprus, who lived more than a hundred years before Augustine's arrival (taking this event as the main point in our chronology), informs us that "the tent-maker" (meaning St. Paul) "brought the law of the Gospel to all men, and persuaded not only the Romans and the subjects of Rome, but the Scythians, Sauromatians, Indians, Seres, Hircanians, Bactrians, the BRITONS, Cimbrians and Germans."

Eusebius, Bishop of Cæsarea in the fourth century, specially mentions the "*British Isles*" as having been visited by the Apostle. Venantius, Bishop of Poitiers in the fifth century, says that "he (Paul) crossed the ocean, and landed and preached in the countries which the *Briton* inhabits. Tertullian, in the second century, and only about a hundred years after the crucifixion of the Lord, speaks of "all the borders of Spain, the divers nations of Gaul (France), and those places of *Britain* into which the Roman arms have not yet been able to penetrate, but which are subject to Christ." Jerome, in the fourth century, mentions "the Churches of Gaul and *Britain*." Chrysostom, also in the fourth century, tells us that the "*British Islands*" had received "the things of Scripture," and bears testimony to their orthodoxy.

The early British Church had its Christian martyrs, the most eminent of whom was Alban, who suffered death for the truth's sake in the fierce persecution which resulted from the cruel decree of the Pagan Emperor Diocletian, in the year 303.

We see, then, that the Gospel took deep and permanent root in England in the earliest ages of Christianity, and the Church which was the result became solid in her constitution and exemplary for her orthodoxy—her catholicity. Jerome, in the fourth century, says that "the Churches of Gaul and *Britain*, with those of Asia and the East, adore one Christ, observe one rule of faith." The names of her Bishops appear on the list of those who attended the great Councils of the several branches of the Universal Church, held at Arles 353, Sardica 347, and Ariminum 359, in the fourth century, or more than two hundred years before the coming of Augustine.

Augustine, on his arrival in England, found his encroachments on the English Church to meet with vigorous resistance from her Bishops. He therefore asked for instructions from Gregory (Pope Gregory the

Great), who had sent him, and inquired, "How are we to deal with the Bishops of Gaul (France) and *Britain*?" Gregory's reply is this: "As for all the Bishops of Britain, we commit them to *your* care." In other words, Gregory here presumes to nominate Augustine their Archbishop, though in face of the stoutest protest that these godly men could make. The ground of their protest was that they would lose the ancient independence of their Church, and that they would become subject to Augustine and the Bishop of Rome.

Hereafter, there long existed in England *two* distinct churches, one of which was the Ancient British Church, which had originated in the days of the Apostles, and had been founded by them, and the other the church recently established by Augustine, at the end of the sixth century, or A. D. 596.

The historian Bede, himself a Roman Presbyter, who lived in the eighth century, speaks of the Ancient English Church as the Old Church, and of that established by Augustine on the authority of the Roman Pope, as the "*New Church*."*

The records of Ecclesiastical History thus testify that the Old and Original Church in England was Apostolic in her rise, orthodox in her teaching, and catholic in her relationship to the rest of the churches of Christendom, which were at first all equal; that she was a distinct, independent and self-governed church, and that she was one of the most faithful of the several branches of the One true and Universal Church.

In course of time, however, the innovations introduced by Augustine was regarded with complacency by the people, and the Roman element prevailed. The Old English Church became weaker as the newer Roman Church strengthened; and after the Conquest the latter, which could then boast of some antiquity, effectually subjugated the former; the power of the Pope increased in English affairs, civil and ecclesiastical, and in the three or four centuries preceding the Reformation was absolutely dominant. That great event, however—the Reformation—resulted in the liberation of the Church in England from Papal control, and her return to her old position as a distinct branch of the Universal (or Catholic) and Apostolic Church.

* Bede's Ecclesiastical History—Book I, Chap. IV.

2. Let us glance at the character of the Roman Church at the time of Augustine's arrival in England in 596, and the CHANGES which she subsequently underwent in her doctrine and in her relation to other churches.

It is the boast of the Papacy that it changes NOT; that the Church of Rome is Catholic and Apostolic, and is the same now as in primitive times. The page of history affords no proof of this assumption, but even contradicts it. We learn therefrom that the Roman branch of the Universal Christian Church was Apostolic in origin, and originally Apostolic in doctrine, and was a true section of the Catholic or Orthodox and Universal Church. She was an equal among others, but in time acquired an undue share of influence and power. For nearly six hundred years the Bishops of Christendom were equal, and the title of Universal Bishop assumed by John of Constantinople was a matter of protest by the Bishop of Rome, who denounced it as savoring of anti-Christ. Yet this very title, with its equivalent, Pope, was taken by Gregory's successors. Even in the third century the supremacy over the Universal Church was severally claimed by the Bishops of Alexandria, Rome and Antioch, "where the believers were first called Christians," and where the first Gentile Christian Church was organized. But in consequence of residing in the Imperial City the Bishop of Rome acquired an influence greater than that of the other Bishops, and on the removal of the seat of empire to Constantinople, being the most distinguished personage left in the old capital, his power grew rapidly and irresistibly. The principal event which pushed on this pre-eminence was the circumstance that in the year 341 the Council of Antioch condemned Athanasius, who thereupon fled to Julius (Pope), the Bishop of Rome, by whom a Council was assembled in his Episcopal city, which acknowledged Athanasius, and set at defiance the decision of the Council of Antioch. This act established a precedent, on which the Popes presumed to base their claim to universal supremacy; and thus from small beginnings the Papal power grew to that gigantic size to which it attained in after ages. From being, as at first, an equal among the other Bishops of Christendom, the Bishop of Rome became, by overbearing and obtrusive means, a hard-handed and despotic lord over God's heritage—the Christian Church.

The Doctrine of the Church of Rome underwent changes concur-

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ment with her increase in power. The several churches composing the General or Catholic Church were orthodox and jealously Scriptural in their doctrine. The great Councils at which all were represented were called to decide on such subjects as the Divinity of Christ and the personality of the Holy Ghost. British Bishops met, as already shown, at these Councils on a perfect equality with the Bishops of Alexandria, Antioch and Rome, more than two hundred and fifty years before Augustine's arrival in England. Their resistance to him on that occasion was grounded on their refusal to be subject to any Bishop of another church, and on their objection to certain changes, such as the observance of Easter, already introduced into the Church at Rome. On all main points of the Christian faith Rome was at this period orthodox or Catholic. From this orthodoxy she gradually declined, until we now see her sadly and lamentably fallen. Had the old British Bishops prophetically foreseen this corruption and departure from the truth, would not their resistance to the encroachments of the Roman See have been tenfold more strenuous? The following is a chronological glance at the errors of the Roman Church, and the date of their establishment as distinctive doctrines :

Papal Usurpation.....	A. D. 608
Invocation of Saints.....	700
Image Worship.....	787
Celibacy of the Clergy.....	1015
Transubstantiation.....	1215
Auricular Confession.....	1215
Half Communion.....	1415
Purgatory.....	1438
Seven Sacraments.....	1547
Apocryphal Books.....	1547
Sacrifice of the Mass.....	1563
Immaculate Conception of the Virgin Mary.....	1854
Infallibility of the Pope.....	1870

These are some, and only some, of the leading errors of the Church of Rome, but many more might be enumerated, such as Tradition, Sham-Miracles, and forbidding the ordinary reading of the Bible, the Word of God. These have all been introduced into the Roman Church, in opposition to the doctrine of the early Christian Church. They formed no part of the Ancient Catholic and Apostolic Constitution, but are in all respects modern *innovations*, and departures from the faith once delivered to the Saints.

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In addition to the doctrinal errors of Rome, the *Confessional* and the *Callboy of the Clergy* (a bachelor priesthood, never sanctioned either under the Mosaic Dispensation or in the Early Christian Church for a thousand years), have produced moral depravity in the Roman Catholic communities of continental Europe, to a frightful and almost incredible degree. The Church of Rome, as long as she maintains these heterodox and unscriptural dogmas, cannot support the claim to be considered Catholic and Apostolic.

II. *The Church of England is Apostolic in her Constitution.* We learn from Ecclesiastical History, that the form of government universally prevalent in the Early Christian Church was *Episcopal*. It is true, as is asserted by Non-Conformists, that the term "Bishop" and "Presbyter" are often used in the Apostolic writings interchangeably. But this arises from the fact that the successors to the Apostles, who were of pre-eminence the chief and first Bishops, were chosen from the Presbyters, as has ever been the usage, and is still in our own church. From the first there were Bishops, Presbyters (abbreviated Priests) and Deacons, and during even the Apostolic age Episcopacy was fully established. Ignatius, Bishop of Antioch, was appointed to that office by the Apostles themselves, about the year 70, or nearly thirty years before the death of St. John. Clement, mentioned by St. Paul in the Epistle to the Philippians (iv. 3), written from Rome during his imprisonment, subsequently became Bishop of that city. Timothy was appointed by Paul as Bishop of Ephesus, and Titus Bishop of Crete, with instructions to exercise Episcopal functions, and, as is still done by our Bishops, to "*ordain Elders*" (Tit. i. 5), the ordinary ministers of the church. Polycarp, the aged Bishop of Smyrna, was a disciple of St. John, and was probably appointed to his Episcopal charge by the Apostle himself. He suffered martyrdom in the year 166. Ireneus, a disciple of Polycarp, was Bishop of Lyons, toward the end of the second century, when Episcopacy was fully established, and whence it continued until the Reformation. The abuses of the Episcopal office by the Church of Rome, and especially by its head, who had early usurped the title of Universal Bishop, decided some of the Reformers on the continent of Europe to reject Episcopacy altogether. Presbyterians, Puritans, and others, then searched into the New Testament for support for their views, and finding the words *Bishop* and *Presbyter* to be sometimes used for the same officiant, persuaded

themselves that their decision was countenanced by Holy Scripture. While, however, these, and the Methodists and other Christian Evangelical denominations, hold the true Apostolic doctrine as contained in the New Testament, we regret their departure from Apostolic usage in the matter of the *Episcopal* form of church government—the Creed, the Litany, and the unexceptionable Articles of our Church.

III. *The Doctrine of the Church of England* is simply that of the pure Word of God. Her Creeds, her Articles, and her varied forms, are intended as so many preservatives against doctrinal corruption, and have for three centuries proved the necessity of such valuable safeguards. No stronger proof of their need can be shown than the fact that the old Presbyterians in England, of two hundred years ago, who repudiated Articles and Creeds, have gradually lapsed into Socinianism, and are now the modern *Unitarians*. On the other hand, they act equally effectively against the ingress of Romish error, and though the Jesuits are at this moment laboring more strenuously than ever before to corrupt both the doctrine and practice of the Church of England, their doings have been condemned by the highest authorities in Ecclesiastical Law as utterly repugnant to the plain teachings and practice of the Church as established for more than three hundred years. It is the glory of our Church that she is founded on the Word of Eternal Truth, and such is her veneration for it, that no fewer than *four* ample portions of it are read at the morning service, namely, the Old Testament, and New Testament lessons, with the Epistle and Gospel. The great doctrines of the Faith are clearly and purely taught, without the cumbersome garbments which have so long clogged and bedarkened the teachings of Rome. She sets forth "Christ and Him crucified" as the Alpha and the Omega of her worship and instruction. She recognizes no auxiliary—neither Virgin nor Saint—for Jesus is "able to save to the uttermost." She enjoins no repetition (as in the Mass) of the offering "once made," but plainly enforces it as that "*full, perfect and sufficient sacrifice, oblation and satisfaction* for the sins of the whole world."

We maintain, then, that the Church of England and her affiliates—the Episcopal Churches of Canada and the United States—are Apostolic in Origin and Constitution, and strictly Catholic in Doctrine. That in these are taught the great truths of the Christian Faith as held

in the Apostolic age, and subsequently by the Catholic or Universal and Orthodox Church in its several branches.

We have the advantage of the various Protestant and Evangelical denominations in retaining not only ancient and Apostolic doctrine, but also ancient and Apostolic usages and forms. Though we wish them God-speed in their labor of love in extending the glad tidings of the Kingdom, we would fain see them cherish that love and veneration for our Church to which she is justly entitled, especially as under God's good providence they owe to her their very existence.

We have the advantage over the Roman Church, inasmuch as we repudiate all the modern, or comparatively modern, errors which have crept into her doctrine and practice since the seventh century. Though Apostolic in origin, and formerly Catholic (Orthodox) in the faith, she has cumbered her worship with so many anti-Scriptural doctrines as to have cut herself off from the Holy Universal Church of Christ, and is now virtually the Church of Mary, her chief intercessor, and of the Pope, her chief ruler and so-called "infallible" guide.

The Church of England, for many centuries in subjection to the Church of Rome, returned at the Reformation to her original independence, to her Scriptural purity, and to her rightful position as a true branch of the Catholic and Apostolic Church. She repudiated Papal errors and Papal domination before the whole of Christendom. She declared the Word of God to be her only authority, and Jesus only her Divine Head. Her Articles and Constitution have been so framed as to suffer no departure from the "faith once delivered to the Saints."

She is now laboring in England, Canada, the United States, and the various missionary fields of the heathen world, with greater energy and success than at any previous period of her history. The Jesuitical agents of Rome are also as fiercely laboring to counteract her good work, to corrupt her doctrine, and to pull down her venerable fabric. They may possibly be permitted for a time to succeed, and cause her to pass through much tribulation; yet shall she again arise, and shine with renewed lustre, and stand forth before the world more compact and vigorous than ever, because she is established on the Word of God, built on the foundation of the Apostles and prophets, the Lord Jesus Christ himself being her chief corner-stone.

